

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-12 IO-13 SSM-03 /097 W
-----048368 182142Z /73

P R 171739Z JAN 78
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0028
INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
.AMEMBASSY AMMAN 5116
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PBOR, PFOR, MASS, IS
SUBJECT: CODEL ZABLOCKI MEETING WITH DEFENSE MINISTER
WEIZMAN.

1. SUMMARY:
IN AN HOUR AND A HALF SESSION WITH CODEL ZABLOCKI, MINISTER
OF DEFENSE WEIZMAN OUTLINED FOR THEM THE KINDS OF SECURITY
ARRANGEMENTS IN THE SINAI THAT ISRAEL MUST NEGOTIATE WITH
EGYPT. HE EMPHASIZED THE WARM PERSONAL RELATIONS HE HAS FORMED
WITH GEN. GAMASY, BUT PREDICATED THAT REACHING AN AGREEMENT WOULD
STILL BE DIFFICULT. EVEN IF PEACE IS ACHIEVED, ISRAEL WILL
NEED SUBSTANTIAL U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE FOR QUITE A FEW MORE
YEARS, HE BELIEVES. THE CODEL WAS FAVORABLY IMPRESSED WITH
WEIZMAN AND, ALTHOUGH HE AT NO POINT DIFFERED SUBSTANTIALLY
WITH P.M. BEGIN'S POLICIES (WHICH THEY HAD HEARD THE PREVIOUS
EVENING), THEY CAME AWAY WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT WEIZMAN WAS A
MORE FLEXIBLE PERSON. END SUMMARY.
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2. CODEL ZABLOCKI MET WITH MINISTER OF DEFENSE WEIZMAN AT THE
KNESSET FOR APPROXIMATELY ONE AND ONE-HALF HOURS ON
JANUARY 16. WEIZMAN WAS UPBEAT AND CONFIDENT THROUGHOUT.
HE STARTED BY TELLING THE CODEL THAT HE GETS ALONG WELL WITH
EGYPTIAN MINISTER OF DEFENSE GAMASY AND THAT HE FEELS A
STRONG PERSONAL FRIENDSHIP HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED BETWEEN

THEM. HE SAID THAT ON THE BASIS OF THIS RELATIONSHIP THAT, IF IT WERE BETWEEN GAMASY AND HIM, THERE WOULD BE PEACE TOMORROW; HOWEVER, FRIENDSHIP IS NOT ENOUGH TO ARRIVE AT A SOLUTION. WEIZMAN SEEMED PLEASED WHEN THE CODEL TOLD HIM THAT GAMASY HAD EXPRESSED THE IDENTICAL FEELING ABOUT HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH WEIZMAN. WEIZMAN SAID THAT HE WOULD SEE GAMASY AGAIN IN CAIRO NEXT THURSDAY(JAN. 19).

3. CONCERNING THE RECENT ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN NEGOTIATIONS, WEIZMAN BELIEVES THAT EACH SIDE HAS BEEN SINCERE IN ITS ATTEMPTS TO ARRIVE AT A SOLUTION AND THAT EACH PARTICIPANT HAS PUT HIS CARDS ON THE TABLE. UNFORTUNATELY, A WIDE GAP STILL EXISTS. WEIZMAN SAID HE TOLD SADAT THAT HE MUST UNDERSTAND THAT THE AVERAGE ISRAELI LIVES IN A STATE OF CLAUSTROPHOBIA WITH A CONSTANT REMINDER OF A REQUIREMENT FOR SECURITY. HE MADE REFERENCE TO THE HUGE ARAB WORLD AROUND ISRAEL AND TO THE FACT THAT, DESPITE THE ARAB SIZE AND STRENGTH, ISRAEL IS VIEWED AS THE AGGRESSOR.

4. WEIZMAN SAID THAT THERE HAS BEEN TOO MUCH TALK CONCERNING THE CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS. HOWEVER, HE HAS THE UTMOST RESPECT FOR SADAT'S INITIATIVE AND ACKNOWLEDGES THAT SADAT, BY HIS ACTION, GAINED THE TOTAL APPRECIATION OF ALL ISRELIS. HE SAID HE TOLD SADAT THAT THE INITIATIVE WAS A GREATER FEAT THAN LANDING THE FIRST MAN ON THE MOON, BUT NOW IS THE TIME TO RETURN TO EARTH. HE ALSO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TOLD SADAT THAT HE SHOULD NOT STRETCH THE RESPECT HE HAD GAINED IN BECOMING THE FIRST NON-ISRAELI TO ACHIEVE SUCH A REPUTATION IN ISRAEL. HE POINTED OUT TO THE CODEL THAT, IN HIS OPION, IF SADAT MAKES A MISTAKE, HE COULD LOSE HIS JOB OR PERHAPS PART OF HIS ARMY. ON THE ISRAELI SIDE, "IF WE MAKE A MISTAKE, WE LOSE ISRAEL. WE ARE, THEREFORE, FAR MORE TOUCHY THAN OTHERS ABOUT OUR DEFENSE AND OUR SECURITY." PEACE IS THE OBJECTIVE, HE CONTINUED, BUT IT SOMETIMES REQUIRES SIGNIFICANT MILITARY FORCE. IT IS NECESSARY THAT ISRAEL, SMALL AND SURROUNDED, SHOULD HAVE THIS CAPABILITY, JUST AS THE U.S. DOES. HE REQUESTED THAT THE CODEL "LOOK AT THE MAP AND SEE WHAT IT IS THAT YOU WANT ME TO DO." IN CLOSING,HE SAID THAT SADAT AND BEGIN HAVE MADE SIGNIFICANT MOVES AND HE CONTINUES TO BE OPTIMISTIC.

5. REP. ZABLOCKI QUESTIONED WEIZMAN CONCERNING HIS VIEWS ON THE NECESSITY FOR A "COOLING OFF PERIOD" DURING WHICH SECURITY FROCES OF ISRAEL WOULD HAVE TO REMAIN IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. WEIZMAN RESPONDED, ADDRESSING ONLY THE SINAI QUESTION, THAT FIVE YEARS WAS BEING

DISCUSSED. HE EMPHASIZED THE ISRAELIS NEED KEEP AN AIRFIELD NEAR EILAT AND STATED HE BELIEVED THAT BORDER SETTLEMENTS CONTRIBUTE TO DEFENSE AND REQUIRE LEADER TO THINK TWICE BEFORE STARTING HOSTILITIES. FOR EXAMPLE, HE CONSIDERED THE MOVEMENT OF ONE MILLION EGYPTIANS INTO THE AREA ALONG THE SUEZ CANAL AN INDICATION OF SADAT'S GOOD INTENTIONS; HE FELT THAT ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS IN THE RAFIAH AREA COULD ALSO CONTRIBUTE TO SECURITY.

6. WIZMAN THEN RETURNED TO BEGIN'S RESPONSE TO SADAT. HE INDICATED THAT THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT DETERMINED THAT IT SHOULD NOT RETURN TO HAGGLING, I.E., GIVE UP PART OF THE SINAI NOW, PART LATER. RATHER, AS A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GESTURE OF TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN SADAT, THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT HAD MADE AN OFFER WHICH TO ISRAELIS WAS "ALMOST FLYING TO THE MOON." HE INSISTED THAT BEGIN HAD NOT RENEGED ON HIS PROMISED AND THAT SOVEREIGNTY IN SINAI WAS STILL A FACTOR IN THE NEGOTIATIONS.

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SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-12 IO-13 SSM-03 /097 W
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HOWEVER, THE GOI WANTS SOME SETTLEMENTS TO REMAIN IN SPECIAL STATUS. HE PLEDGED "I WILL DO MY DAMNEST TO ACHIEVE PEACE WITH EGYPT," BUT LATER ADDED THAT IS "TAKES TWO TO TANGO." HE SAID THAT SINAI IS ONLY PART OF A GREATER EGYPT AND THAT HE IS OPTIMISTIC THAT BOTH SIDES WILL BEND IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THE DESIRED PEACE.

7. CONGRESSMAN PEASE AND MEYNER QUESTIONED WEIZMAN ON THE NECESSARY LEVEL OF U.S. MILITARY AID TO ISRAEL IN THE FUTURE. WEIZMAN SAID THAT HE WOULD BE GOING TO WASHINGTON LATER THIS MONTH TO DISCUSS THE PROBLEM WITH THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE. HE WOULD THEN REVIEW WHAT MIGHT BE ISRAEL'S REQUIREMENTS IF THERE IS PEACE AND STATED THAT , UNFORTUNATELY, THE REQUIREMENTS MAY BE MORE SOPHISTICATED AND MORE EXPENSIVE THAN WHAT IS GIVEN NOW. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HE COULD NOT SAY HOW LONG IT WOULD CONTINUE TO BE NECESSARY TO ASK THE U.S. FOR ASSISTANCE, BUT SPECULATED THAT PERHAPS IN FIVE TO SEVEN YEARS THE GOAL OF CUTTING DOWN FINANCIAL DEPENDENCE ON THE U.S. COULD BE REACHED. (IN A LATER ECONOMIC BRIEFING, THE CODEL WAS TOLD THAT U.S. ECONOMIC (NON-MILITARY) ASSISTANCE MAY NO LONGER BE NEEDED AFTER 1980).

8. CONGRESSMAN DODD ASKED WEIZMAN FOR HIS OPINION CONCERNING THE SAUDI ARABIAN REQUEST FOR F-15 AIRCRAFT. WEIZMAN SAID THAT HE WAS NOT ENTIRELY OPPOSED. HOWEVER, IF THERE WERE PEACE, HE WOULD ASK WHO IS SAUDI ARABIA'S ENEMY. HE WONDERED WHY SAUDI ARABIA IS BUILDING A MAJOR BASE 150 MILES FROM EILAT FOR "ISRAEL IS NOT SAUDI ARABIA'S ENEMY." IF THERE WERE PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST, ISRAEL, HE BELIEVES, WOULD HAVE NO REASON TO OBJECT TO THE SALES TO SAUDI ARABIA. HOWEVER, HE DOES NOT WANT TO SEE F-15'S OF ISRAEL FIGHTING F-15'S OF SAUDI ARABIA.

9. THE CODEL LEFT THE MEETING APPRECIATING WEIZMAN'S FRANKNESS AND BELIEVING THAT HE WAS A GOOD CHOICE AS HEAD OF THE ISRAELI TEAM TO THE MILITARY COMMITTEE. SEVERAL CODEL MEMBERS COMMENTED THAT, WHILE WEIZMAN SHOWED NO POLICY DIFFERENCES WITH P.M. BEGIN, WEIZMAN SEEMED MUCH MORE INCLINED TO FLEXIBILITY TO REACH AN AGREEMENT WITH EGYPT.

10. THIS MESSAGE HAS BEEN CLEARED BY CODEL.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CODELS, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978JERUSA00134
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780029-0211, D780025-0537
Format: TEL
From: JERUSALEM
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780156/aaaabvas.tel
Line Count: 226
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3764119
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CODEL ZABLOCKI MEETING WITH DEFENSE MINISTER WEIZMAN.
TAGS: PBOR, PFOR, MASS, IS
To: STATE H
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/00d2cfe2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014